

ARMY WOULD FREE 618 ACRES OF VOW

T 3/12/60

Willingness to Sell Fringe
Area to Private Interests
Arrived at Reluctantly

By CHARLES BARTLETT

From Chattanooga Times Bureau

WASHINGTON — Yielding to pressure from Chattanooga officials and Sen. Estes Kefauver, the Army agreed Friday to release approximately 618 acres of land on the periphery of the Volunteer Ordnance Works for sale to private interests for industrial development.

If the release is approved by Congress, the Department of Defense, and the General Services Administration, the land will be advertised by the GSA for sale by bids. This collateral approval is expected but it may involve some delay.

The release reflects the Army's determination to hold VOW in reserve for a possible emergency and all of the other 177 acres in the installation will remain in federal ownership for the foreseeable future.

6 Unconnected Tracts

The land that is being released consists of six unconnected tracts, all at the regulation safety distance from the ordnance works. One 12-acre tract fronts on Chickamauga Lake, a situation which would make it suitable for commercial shipping on the waterways if a channel were dug to the established navigation channel. No federal buildings exist on the property, which is described as including pasture, hilly, and wooded land.

The government's water supply will not be available to purchasers of the peripheral land unless some agreement can be negotiated for the supply of federal water during peacetime. Water obtained under such an agreement would presumably cease to be available in the event of an emergency.

A spokesman indicated that the Army considers the VOW

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an important aspect of its reserve capacities and that the decision to part with the land was a reluctant one, prompted largely by the persistent prodding of Mayor Olgiati and Kefauver. The latter, informed of the decision, wired city officials that he would take steps to see that it was approved by the Senate as swiftly as possible.

Must Be Screened

The property which the Army has declared excess will now be screened by the Defense Department to determine if any of it is needed by the other services. After Defense Department approval has been obtained, the proposal will be submitted to the Senate and House Armed Services committees. The release will not require legislation but simply an assent by a majority of both committees. When that action is completed, the property will be turned over to GSA for disposal. That agency customarily advertises for bids or, in the event of an offering for which there may be a small market, solicits proposals.

The Army action was announced by Courtney Johnson, assistant secretary for logistics.

KEFAUVER WIRE TELLS

BENDER OF DECISION

Sen. Estes Kefauver notified County Manager A. L. Bender by telegram Friday that the 618 acres within the Volunteer Ordnance Works had been declared excess federal property.

Offering of the property for industrial purposes now goes to the Senate Armed Services Committee for appropriate action, the telegram said.

Sen. Kefauver added, "I will do everything within my power to facilitate."

FUTURE USE SEEN FOR SITE OF VOW

T 11/9/60

McInturff Says Ordnance
Plant Location Would
Make Good Park

FOR CITY AND COUNTY

Thinks Schools, Industry
Also Could Probably
Be Put There

Commissioner McInturff suggested Wednesday that 250 acres of the Volunteer Ordnance Works property now in the process of being declared surplus is desirable for future use by the city and county.

The commissioner, who inspected the property Wednesday with City Coordinator Marble Hensley, said that the Army had considered the property for training purposes but that it is his understanding that they have decided against using it.

He said there are two other tracts, one an irregular strip at the eastern end of the VOW property and a small tract on Chickamauga Lake at one of the VOW pumping stations.

Referring to the 250-acre tract which is located near Highway 58 at Harrison, McInturff said:

"I think it would be desirable for future use by the city and county. It could be used for parks or schools or both, or for other public purposes."

The commissioner noted that there is a strong trend for residential development in that particular area. For that reason he foresees that land for parks and schools will be needed as residential development is intensified.

Asked whether he thought the property could be developed as an industrial park, McInturff said:

"Yes, it possibly could be useful as an industrial park."

SALE OF VOW SITE APPROVED BY GSA

T 2/12/60

60 Acres to Be Purchased
by County Schools If
No Protest Raised

Sale of 60 acres of unimproved land in the Volunteer Ordnance Works to the Hamilton County education department was approved Monday by the General Services Administration in Washington.

If there is no objection from Senate and House Government Operations Committees, the transaction will become effective in 30 days.

The school board recently voted to offer \$31,000—the appraised price—for the VOW site. It lies across Highway 58 from Harrison School and is to be acquired by the county for use in the building of a high school and junior high school.

No immediate plans have been made for such construction, but Supt. Sam P. McConnell and the board decided to acquire the tract in view of the price and the prospect of additional home construction in eastern Hamilton County.

The acreage was declared surplus to Army needs last September.

LOCAL, HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

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